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Extended Leaves of Absence for Classroom Teachers.

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Extended leave of absence policies for classroom teachers in 129 school systems with enrollments of 25,000 or more are reported for 1965-66 in this national survey. A table lists, in order of descending frequency, the following purposes for which leaves are granted: (1) Military service, (2) professional study, (3) maternity, (4) exchange teaching abroad, (5) restoration of health, (6) paid sabbatical, (7) service for professional organizations, (8) government service, (9) Department of Defense schools, (10) travel, (11) research, (12) exchange teaching in the U.S., (13) appointment or election to political office, and (14) work experience. The table presents the number and percent of school systems granting extended leaves of absence for each purpose. Representative samples of school district policies covering the various types of extended leaves are also presented. (TT)

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EXTENDED LEAVES OF ABSENCE FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Wise school policy-makers recognize the long-range value of making it possible for a competent teacher to leave his classroom for a semester or an entire year without losing his job or salary status. Such policies can help to encourage professional improvement, keep good teachers, and stimulate the educational program in general.

Sabbatical leave, permitting teachers with a stipulated number of years' service to take extended leaves with part pay, is provided in some school systems. A larger number of systems grant formal leaves of absence without pay to teachers with certain qualifications. Usually this leave is available after a much shorter period of service than is the case with sabbatical leave.

A questionnaire recently circulated by the Educational Research Service to school systems with 25,000 or more enrollment inquired whether or not long-term leave is granted for a variety of purposes, including paid sabbatical. A separate question asked for details of sabbatical leave policies and procedures. A report of the sabbatical practices revealed through this survey has already been published by the Educational Research Service.1/ Details were also requested regarding maternity leave policies; a forthcoming ERS Circular will report on this topic.

The questionnaire was returned by 129 of the 150 school systems to which it was sent. The table on page 2 indicates the purposes or reasons for which extended leave may be granted and tabulates the number and percent of the responding systems granting leave for the various purposes. The data have been broken down by enrollment stratum, as follows:

Stratum 1 (100,000 or more) ... 23 replies
Stratum 2 (50,000-99,999) ..... 38 replies
Stratum 3 (25,000-49,999) ..... 68 replies

The purposes for which extended leaves are granted are listed in the table in the order of frequency with which they were reported among the 129 school systems. It can be seen that all but nine give leave of absence when a teacher is

1/ National Education Association, American Association of School Administrators and Research Division. Sabbatical Leave Provisions for Classroom Teachers in Larger School Systems. Educational Research Service Circular No. 8, 1965. Washington, D. C.: the ERS, November 1965. 26 p. $1.

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called into military service. Leave without pay for professional study is granted in all but 15 of the systems, while only 16 fail to provide maternity leave. Other purposes for which extended leave is provided in more than 60 percent of the 129 systems are exchange teaching abroad, restoration of health, sabbatical, and professional organization work.

The inquiry form asked respondents to add any extended leave provided in their school systems which were not listed in the question. Mentioned were such leaves as home responsibilities, matrimony, "opportunity of superior character," and teaching in a teacher training institution. Beginning on page 4 are examples of personnel policies governing extended leave for all of the purposes listed in the table, except "to serve professional organizations." No doubt

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF SCHOOL SYSTEMS GRANTING EXTENDED LEAVES OF ABSENCE FOR VARIOUS PURPOSES, 1965-66

Purpose of leave	Stratum 1 (23 systems)	Stratum 2 (38 systems)	Stratum 3 (68 systems)	Totals (129 systems)
Military service	23 (100.0%)	36 (94.7%)	61 (89.7%)	120 (93.0%)
Professional study (other than sabbatical	23 (100.0%)	33 (86.8%)	58 (85.3%)	114 (88.4%)
Maternity	23 (100.0%)	37 (97.4%)	53 (77.9%)	113 (87.6%)
Exchange teaching abroad	21 (91.3%)	31 (81.6%)	54 (79.4%)	106 (82.2%)
Restoration of health (other than sabbatical or sick leave)	15 (65.2%)	29 (76.3%)	49 (72.1%)	93 (72.1%)
Paid sabbatical	17 (73.9%)	24 (63.2%)	37 (54.4%)	78 (60.5%)
To serve professional organization	16 (69.6%)	23 (60.5%)	39 (57.4%)	78 (60.5%)
Government service (e.g., Peace Corps)	16 (69.6%)	22 (57.9%)	39 (57.4%)	77 (59.7%)
Department of Defense schools	13 (56.5%)	21 (55.3%)	43 (63.2%)	77 (59.7%)
Travel (other than sabbatical)	14 (60.9%)	21 (55.3%)	41 (60.3%)	76 (58.9%)
Research (other than sabbatical)	16 (69.6%)	19 (50.0%)	41 (60.3%)	76 (58.9%)
Exchange teaching in U. S.	13 (56.5%)	17 (44.7%)	39 (57.4%)	69 (53.5%)
Appointment or election to political office	9 (39.1%)	14 (36.8%)	20 (29.4%)	43 (33.3%)
Work experience	8 (34.8%)	4 (10.5%)	10 (14.7%)	22 (17.1%)

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requests for this type of leave are relatively rare and are handled individually in most school systems. For example, although no formal ruling appears in the system's personnel manual, Dade County, Florida, regularly releases the president of the local teachers association one-half time, with full pay.

The survey disclosed items of interest in connection with several other types of extended leave:

> The typical sabbatical policy in a large school system permits a teacher to apply for extended leave after seven years of service and stipulates that the leave must be spent in professional study or educational travel. It states that the teacher may remain on leave for one full school year with one-half pay, and that he must agree to serve the school system one or two years following sabbatical leave.

- There is no "typical" maternity leave policy. Regulations vary widely with respect to length of leave, extensions of leave, and the point in pregnancy when a teacher is required to begin her leave.
- Teachers given leave to enter military service sometimes receive one month's salary from the school system. This practice is common throughout the State of California.
- A board policy in Escambia County, Florida, states that "any member of the instructional staff who is elected to the legislature will be given professional leave WITH PAY to attend regular and extra-ordinary sessions of the legislature."
- Seattle, Washington, teachers who exchange with teachers in the United Kingdom or Canada receive their regular salary from the Seattle School District; those who exchange with teachers in other foreign countries are paid by the country in which they teach.

SAMPLE EXTENDED LEAVE POLICIES

Military service

- In meeting the initial obligation to the United States Armed Services, all regular full-time employees (except hourly or daily paid employees) receive up to one full month's salary if the first month of active service occurs during a normal work period. The employee returns with full benefits of salary step and position which would have accrued to him had he not been absent.

* * *

Professional study or travel (other than sabbatical)

- After having acquired tenure, any certificated employee may, in the discretion of the board, be granted a leave of absence without pay for the purpose of educational improvement and advancement for not less than one semester or more than one year. An extension of the leave period may be granted where completion of the courses for advancement requires longer than one year and where advantage will accrue to the school district. Teachers given leaves of absence under this rule must sign an agreement that the board will be given written notice no less than 30 days before expiration date of the leave, or before May 15, whichever is earlier, of their intention to return. Failure to so notify the board will be considered as notice that the teacher will not return and that the position is vacant.

- The superintendent of schools shall have authority, subject to the approval of the board of education, to grant leaves of absence without pay for one year or less to any regularly assigned member of the teaching force who has completed three years of continuous satisfactory service, for travel or for study in accredited institutions of learning. After absence on leave for study in an accredited institution of learning, credentials showing the course pursued and the amount of work done shall be presented to the superintendent of schools. When a leave has been granted under this section, the absence shall not be construed as a break in service so far as seniority is concerned.

- Leave of absence for approved foreign travel and advanced study may be granted to tenure teachers without pay upon the recommendation of the superintendent with the approval of the board of education, for a period not to exceed one year.

* * *

Maternity

- As soon as an educational staff member knows she is pregnant, she may, and not later than the end of the third month of pregnancy shall, make application for maternity leave of absence, with loss of full pay which leave shall normally become effective not later than the end of the sixth month of pregnancy, providing she can satisfactorily perform her regular duties, and may extend until one year from the date of birth of the child. Upon application by the staff member this leave may be extended to, but in no case beyond, the beginning of the scholastic year (September 1st) following the child's third birthday. Before she returns to duty, the staff member may be required to present a physician's certificate stating that she is able to resume her regular work. At the expiration of any maternity leave of absence, the staff member's reassignment to active duty shall be contingent upon the existence of a vacancy for which she is qualified.

  If a woman educational staff member adopts an infant child, leave of absence may be granted, with loss of full pay, until one year from the date of birth of the child. Upon application, this leave may be extended to, but in no case beyond, the beginning of the scholastic year (September 1st) following the child's third birthday.

  An educational staff member who has been on two or more consecutive maternity leaves of absence which extend for a total period of more than five years shall pass a professional examination before being reassigned to duty except as provided herein. If such staff member is eligible and applies for reassignment before the expiration of a five year period from the date of the beginning of her first leave and if no suitable vacancy develops until after the expiration of the five year period, her leave of absence shall be extended for a period not to exceed two addition-

SAMPLE POLICIES (Continued)

Maternity (Continued)

al years without her being required to take a professional examination. The effect of this will be that such a staff member may be absent for a period not to exceed seven years before she is required to pass a professional examination to be eligible for reassignment.

* * *

Teaching abroad

- Teachers wishing to be considered for exchanges must make application in accordance with the regulations set up by the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The superintendent will consider all such requests. In general, very few exchange teacher leaves can be arranged. There are three types of programs in which a teacher may participate:

    1. An exchange-teacher program where another nation sends a teacher in exchange for our teacher, and both are paid by their own schools. This type of exchange requires the approval of the superintendent, but is not processed as a leave because the teacher continues to be paid as if on duty in the school.

    2. A program where our teacher is sent to teach in a foreign nation without an exchange. After obtaining the consent of the superintendent, this is processed as a regular leave.

    3. A program where teachers are exchanged, but paid by the school where they teach. This program is seldom used (because of the lower salaries in other nations); but if it is, after permission from the superintendent, it is processed as a regular leave.

- Any professional employee, upon the recommendation of the superintendent of schools, may be granted leave of absence to serve as an exchange teacher in any foreign country, territory, or possession of the United States. The board shall pay such exchange teacher the full salary to which he would have been entitled if teaching in his regular position if, under the terms of the exchange agreement, the board is to pay his salary.

  Professional employees, while on leave of absence as exchange teachers, shall be considered to be in regular full-time daily attendance in the position from which leave was granted for purposes of acquiring sabbatical leave entitlement, increment entitlement, and right to continue membership in and make contributions to the Public School Employee's Retirement Fund.

  The board may, on recommendation of the superintendent of schools, pay an exchange teacher coming to the school system such salary as the certification and/or qualifications of the teacher justify. Such exchange teacher shall be entitled to all fringe benefits accorded regular employees.

* * *

Restoration of health (other than sabbatical or sick leave)

- A written application for a leave of absence for ill health must be accompanied by a statement from the attending doctor and approved by the school physician; said statement must indicate the nature of the illness and definitely recommend that the employee be relieved of duties.

  Such request for leave, if approved, shall be granted for the remainder of the semester or the remainder of the school year, or for an entire school year, with the possibility of a renewal of the leave, upon written request. An earlier termination of this leave, if requested in writing by the employee, shall be at the discretion of the superintendent and in accordance with the needs and interests of the schools.

  At least 120 days before an employee on a leave of absence for ill health expects to resume his duties, the employee, or someone acting in his behalf, must request, in writing, the reinstatement of said employee to the staff. In requesting reinstatement, said employee does not forfeit his right to request an extension of his leave of absence for ill health. Failure to comply with this regulation shall be deemed an automatic resignation.

SAMPLE POLICIES (Continued)

Restoration of health (Continued)

Not less than 10 days before termination of leave, a doctor's statement, approved by the school physician, must be submitted by the employee. This statement shall certify that the employee has been examined and that he will be able to resume his duties with the board when the leave of absence expires.

Whenever any employee has been absent from active service a sufficient number of days to exhaust his accumulated sick leave days, and continues in absence, the superintendent shall investigate the facts of the case and shall have authority to recommend to the board that an unrequested leave of absence be granted according to the provisions set forth in board rules relevant to leaves of absence. Any employee who refuses to comply with the terms of such a leave of absence shall be considered to have terminated his contract.

* * *

Paid sabbatical

- After seven consecutive years of satisfactory service, sabbatical leave for full-time study or travel may be granted to a certificated employee for a period of not less than one semester nor more than one school year. Such leave is granted to no more than four employees of the school district. Sabbatical leave is not granted as a reward for work already performed, but rather as an opportunity to prepare for improved service in the schools.

  Any certificated employee eligible for sabbatical leave shall make application to the assistant superintendent for personnel by the end of the first semester of the school year prior to the school year in which the leave is requested, except that sabbatical leaves for the second semester shall be requested no later than the end of the first quarter of the school year prior to the second semester in which the leave is desired. A committee will make selections on the basis of the following points: (a) the priority of applications, (b) reasonable distribution of applicants by schools, (c) relative merits of reasons for desiring leave, (d) previous leave by the employee, (e) seniority.

  Payment is fifty percent of the contract salary less deductions for retirement, income tax, etc.

* * *

Special service (e.g., government service, work experience, research)

- Special service leaves may be granted for full-time service when such service is directly related to the employee's area of work. Such leaves shall be limited to special service performed for or with an institution of higher learning, a foundation or research organization, a state education department, the United States Office of Education, or similar institutions or organizations, plans for which shall have been submitted in writing and approved in advance, such plans to constitute a predetermined program designed to improve the individual's competence.

- Leaves of absence for not more than one year will be granted upon the recommendation of the superintendent of schools and the approval of the board of education for the purpose of carrying on a program of educational research not associated with the earning of an academic degree, or for temporary service with a recognized professional association. Such leaves shall not be renewable, and the normal salary increment may be granted upon the recommendation of the superintendent.

- Upon recommendation of the superintendent, leave up to two full school years may be granted by the board of education to an employee for the purpose of teaching in a teacher training institution. The employee shall furnish such reports as may be requested by the superintendent.

  (1) Eligibility. To be eligible, an employee shall be on tenure and hold a standard or advanced professional certificate valid for the period of leave at the time leave is granted. To be eligible for the consultant's fee, the employee shall agree to serve as a consultant in the school system for periods that are mutual-

SAMPLE POLICIES (Continued)

Special service (Continued)

ly agreed upon by the superintendent and the employee and that are scheduled so as not to conflict with the duties assigned by the teacher training institution.

(2) Consultant's fee. The board of education shall pay the difference between the regular salary that the teacher receives from the institution and the salary that the teacher would have received had he remained in his present position.

(3) Benefits.

(a) An employee who is covered by the Employee Benefit Plan shall be covered by this Plan while on leave for teaching in a teacher training institution. The cost of the Employee Benefit Plan shall be paid in full by the school system.

(b) Deductions for the state teachers' retirement system shall be made for that part of the salary received from the board of education.

(c) An employee on leave for teaching shall be treated as a full-time employee. The employee's length of service and the right to receive salary increments shall be the same as if the employee had remained in the position that he held when leave was granted.

(4) Contractual agreement. An employee accepting leave for teaching in a teacher training institution shall enter into a written contract whereby he agrees to return to service in the school system for at least a two-year period immediately following the leave of absence or reimburse the board of education for all monies paid to him or on his behalf during the period of leave.

(5) Change of status during period of leave. If the employee on leave for teaching in a teacher training institution cannot complete the program for which leave was granted, it is his responsibility to so notify the superintendent. The leave may then be rescinded by the board of education and the employee placed on the appropriate leave status, reassigned, or terminated. Salary allowance and benefits shall be adjusted accordingly, and the employee must make arrangements satisfactory to the board of education for the reimbursement of any monies paid to him or on his behalf for which he is liable as a result of the change in leave status.

(6) Tenure status on return from leave. An employee who is on tenure at the time leave for teaching in a teacher training institution is granted shall continue to be on tenure. Upon return from leave, the employee shall continue in the tenure status he held at the time leave was granted.

* * *

To teach in dependents schools

- To be eligible for a leave of absence to teach in an armed services school overseas, an individual must have served on contract in the school system during the four years preceding, without intervening leaves of absence, and at the time of application must be under regular contract with the system. Leaves of absence for this purpose are granted for one year and may not be extended. Not more than a total of 15 such leaves will be granted for one school year.

  Application for this leave of absence must be made on a blank provided for that purpose, available in the Personnel Division, and must be returned no later than April 1st preceding the leave. No increment on the salary schedule may be earned while a teacher is on this type of leave. Teachers on leave are asked to notify the appropriate assistant superintendent by April 1st if they wish to be given contracts for the following year.

* * *

SAMPLE POLICIES (Continued)

Exchange teaching in the United States

- This school system has, for several years, entered into arrangements whereby a selected group of teachers has the opportunity each year to exchange positions with teachers from cities in other sections of the country. It is felt by the school authorities of this city and the other cities concerned that the plan is of mutual advantage and that the resulting benefits warrant its continuance.

  Candidates for exchange positions are selected on the basis of outstanding teaching ability and service. Teachers desiring to be considered for exchange positions must first make application to their own superintendents of schools and have the endorsement of and be strongly recommended by their superintendents. Negotiations for exchange positions are carried on between superintendents. The following policies apply to teachers on exchange from this school system:

  Tenure, salary increments, and retirement status of exchange teachers are unaffected by the exchange arrangements.

  The salaries of teachers on exchange are paid by this school system, not by the system to which they go.

  All teachers on exchange are required to submit health certificates.

  It is necessary for exchange teachers to obtain teaching certificates in many states to which they are assigned. Applications for these certificates are made to the various state departments of education. A small fee is generally charged for such certificates.

  The exchange of positions is for one year only, unless extended for an additional year by the consent of the two school systems and the teacher involved.

  It is assumed that teachers on exchange in both cities concerned will be granted sick leave privileges that prevail in those cities. In case they exceed the number of absences with pay allowed for sickness, exchange teachers are expected to make the necessary payments for substitute teachers and/or any other required reimbursements out of their own salaries.

  In the event that either exchange teacher becomes unable to perform the work to which he is assigned, because of physical disability or other causes, another regular teacher may be substituted in his place or the exchange arrangements may be terminated.

* * *

Political leave

- Leaves of absence for political activity without salary, for the purpose of being a candidate for political office or holding public office, shall be arranged within the framework of the following rules:

  A. School employees engaging in political activity shall make it clear that their utterances and actions are theirs as individuals.

  B. Leaves of absence shall be requested in writing.

  C. Leaves of absence for campaigning and holding office may be arranged for a definite period. If the candidate is not elected, he shall be returned to his position immediately.

  D. Leave may include voter-registration and election-day duties, or other political responsibilities.

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